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ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationships between providers of primary and secondary teacher education and the schools with which they shared preservice training programs. The study addressed how schools and teachers were selected for the practicums; financial and training contributions made by providers to the schools; relationships between providers and practicum schools; perceived effects of the practicum experience; and comparison of results with results of research on traditional providers and the normal and model schools. Participants were 5 of 10 new teacher education providers and 18 diverse participating schools. Researchers conducted telephone interviews with school principals (or other chosen spokespersons) responsible for organizing the practicums. Results indicated that schools were selected to cover the entire spectrum. Most new providers paid the standard associate teachers' allowance per trainee. Most new providers had developed close relationships with their schools. All schools made positive comments about their relationships with new providers and mentioned the benefits to them from involvement with trainees. When comparing study data to data from normal and model schools, results showed that the advantages to providers of schools such as the normal schools outweigh any disadvantages to the providers. (Normal schools specifically receive funding, buildings, and additional staffing in order to provide practicums.) Many of the schools in this study lacked the advantages of designation and funding. Contains 17 references. (SM)

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ED 430 938

# Provider Proliferation: Progress or Problems for the Practicum?

## A Study of Teaching Practice in Times of Expansion

Rae Julian

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New Zealand Council for Educational Research
Wellington
1998

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# Provider Proliferation: Progress or Problems for the Practicum?

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report seeks to add to the information about the relationships between providers of primary and secondary teacher education, and the schools with which they share pre-service training programmes. It examines specifically the new providers and their practicum schools, as a complementary study to that previously carried out on the traditional colleges of education and the normal and model schools (Julian, 1997). The research questions addressed in the report are:

- How are the schools and the teachers who assist with the practicums selected?
- What financial and training contribution do the providers make to the schools in order to ensure that the schools are able to carry out their task effectively?
- How close is the relationship between the providers and the practicum schools, in terms of common goals for the practicum, understanding of each other's philosophies, and general liaison?
- What is the perceived effect of the practicum experience (including a possible multiplicity of providers) on the schools?
- How do the answers to these questions compare with the results of the research on the traditional providers and the normal and model schools?

## Methodology

Five of the 10 new providers of teacher education, chosen to try to cover as wide a range of difference from the traditional providers as possible, and some of the schools which they used for practicums, formed the sample. The providers nominated a number of schools, and 18 were chosen from the list, covering a range of deciles and school types. Relevant questions from the study of normal and model schools (Julian, 1997) were replicated as much as possible in order to provide comparable data.

Telephone interviews were carried out with either the principal or his/her nominee from the schools. The nominee was a liaison or mentor teacher, or the person designated to be in charge of the practicums. The provider interviews were carried out with the person or persons responsible for the organisation of practicums.

## Results

### Selection of Schools and Teachers

The providers select schools mainly in order to cover a range of deciles, school types, and ethnic groups. Geographic factors are also taken into account, in order to meet the needs of the trainees. This contrasts with the normal schools which were chosen by the then Department of Education for their proximity to the traditional provider. One of the few criticisms of the normal schools was that very few of them were in the lower decile range (Julian, 1997).

Associate teachers were chosen mainly by the schools. Assisting with practicums was seldom a relevant factor in the appointment of teachers to the school, in contrast to the normal and model schools, where it was found to be a criterion (Julian, 1997).

Some of the new providers had introduced different systems of linking theory to practice. The

most innovative of these was the establishment of mentor teachers, who provided some of the theoretical training for the trainees within the school setting, and assumed the primary role for the guidance and assessment of the trainees during the practicums. The mentors were selected by the provider from nominations by the schools. A number of variations on this model had also been introduced by other providers, such as curriculum mentors, lead teachers, and master teachers. Liaison teachers also played a major role between one provider and its associated schools.

### Financial and Training Contributions by the Providers

Most of the new providers paid the standard associate teachers' allowance of $5.20 per week per trainee. Some also paid an extra sum per practicum to cover the costs of consumable items used by the trainees. Two providers made additional payments, one making a payment to the co-ordinator, and another paying a higher allowance to the associates. The latter provider also paid a number of the special trainee-related costs of the mentor teachers, including university fees for 2 papers, release time, travel costs, and an allowance for time spent with the trainees. The variation among the payments was mentioned by a number of schools, especially those who worked with 2 or more different providers, as a contentious issue for their teachers.

The mentor teachers were the only teachers who received a substantial training input from the new providers. Most of the associates were given practicum handbooks which explained the provider's expectations of the schools, and a number of providers held optional meetings for associates, either annually or before the practicums.

### The Relationship Between the New Providers and the Practicum Schools

The relationship between the new providers and their associated schools varied according to the degree of contact between them. Two providers had formed partnerships with the schools, with close liaison over programmes, planning of practicums, assessment of trainees, and involvement of the teachers in the work of the provider, including representation on provider committees. The lecturers at another provider were based at the schools during the practicums which led to constant communication and clear understanding of each other's philosophies. The other 2 providers had less formal contact with their practicum schools, with the exception of the school that shared a campus with its provider and was seen as part of the same institution.

The correlation between the providers' and schools' interpretation of the goals of the practicum expectations of the providers and practice of the schools towards reaching the goals was not very close. Interpretations coincided only for areas such as observation and discussion of the associate's teaching practice, and giving the trainee opportunities to teach and to receive feedback on the lessons. Apart from that of mentor teachers and their provider, the language used by the providers was markedly different from that of the school respondents. Concepts such as reflection, which were mentioned by most providers, were not part of most of the school respondents' vocabulary during the interviews.

### Perceived Effect of the Practicum Experience on the Schools

All of the schools made positive comments about their relationships with the new providers. They saw mainly benefits to the schools from the involvement with the trainees, especially from the input of new ideas and enthusiasm. Some of the new providers were perceived as having worked

on resolving problems which arose during the early practicums, with positive results.

Some negative comments were made, mainly about variability of standards among the trainees. Those schools which worked with a number of providers mentioned problems of trying to arrange appropriate timetables for trainees, especially those who attended the schools for part of the week, and those with longer practicum periods.

When the schools expressed concerns about the new providers, such as a possible lower calibre of trainees, and poorer standards of training, it was clear that most were not talking about the providers with whom they were closely associated. Their comments were based more on possibilities than personal experience.

## Conclusions

Most of the new providers in the current study have developed close relationships with schools, and provide a challenge to the traditional providers to emulate some of their practices with regard to practicums in order to avoid criticism from the schools which work with both old and new providers.

Some concerns expressed by educationists, such as the pressure on schools to provide practicums for a number of providers, reported in the study of normal and model schools (Julian, 1997), as well as in the current study, are particularly valid in locations where there is a large number of providers. The current research indicates the need for a collaborative effort among schools and providers in these areas to co-ordinate their practicum requirements and ease the pressure on schools. Whether this could happen in an age of competition and contestability is open to question. Concerns about standards were also raised by a number of schools. It was suggested that some new providers were lured into teacher education by the possibility of gaining EFTS funding more easily for places for teacher trainees than they would for students in other fields. If that is the case, then any body responsible for approving teacher education courses, and registering graduates from such courses, will need to maintain systems which involve constant vigilance.

When the current study is compared with that of the normal and model schools (Julian, 1997), it is clear that the advantages, to providers, of schools such as the normal schools outweigh any disadvantages to those providers. The normal schools are specifically designated to provide practicums, with funding, buildings, and additional staffing allocations. The trainees are part of their usual daily experience. Many of the schools in the current study were used by the new providers in similar ways to the normal schools, but they lacked the advantages of designation and funding, which helped the normal schools to attract high-calibre teachers with a specific role of teacher education. The Ministry of Education's (1997) Green Paper on Teacher Education recommends the abolition of normal and model schools, and the provision of funding to the providers of teacher education so that they can choose their own practicum schools. It seemed likely from the research involving the traditional providers that they would choose the former normal and model schools for their practicums (Julian, 1997). It would seem equally likely that the relationships developed between the new providers in this sample and their practicum schools in their early years of operation will persist. Some issues have been identified arising from the proliferation of training providers—they will need to be resolved if the end result is to be a better education system for the school children of New Zealand.

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# INTRODUCTION

This report seeks to add to the information about the teacher practicums, in particular the relationships between providers of primary and secondary teacher education, and the schools with which they share pre-service training programmes. It examines specifically the new providers and their practicum schools, as a complementary study to that previously carried out on the traditional colleges of education and the normal and model schools (Julian, 1997). The research questions addressed in the report are:

- How are the schools and the teachers who assist with the practicums selected?
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- What is the perceived effect of the practicum experience (including a possible multiplicity of providers) on the schools?
- How do the answers to these questions compare with the results of the research on the traditional providers and the normal and model schools?

The study did not include the early childhood sector where there has also been a recent influx of new providers, sufficient to warrant an independent study. It was also not possible within the short timeframe of this study to include the views of trainees, which would be another useful topic for future research.

## Background

A revolution has occurred in the world of pre-service teacher education during the years since 1989. At that time, teacher trainees went to one of 5 colleges of education, or to the Waikato University School of Education. Primary-school teacher trainees had much of their practicum experience at the 30 normal and model schools which were specifically designated for that purpose. Most secondary trainees attended 1-year courses at the Christchurch and Auckland Colleges of Education.

In 1997 the picture is very different. Ramsay and Hodder (1997) found that there were 16 directly funded providers of pre-service teacher education, and another 10 institutions which act as conduits for programmes provided by the main institutions. The 26 providers operate out of 50 different sites, including one in Malaysia, and not including the range of courses offered through the Internet by one provider. Figure 1 shows the distribution of the provision of teacher education throughout New Zealand.

The traditional 3-year course for primary trainees, and the 1-year postgraduate course for secondary trainees, have been superseded in a number of ways. New entrants to primary teacher education in 1997 could, depending on their qualifications, choose from a shortened course of 1–2 years (acknowledging prior learning); an expanded 4-year course which includes gaining a Bachelor of Education degree (BEd); a 3-year bilingual course; a 4-year course including a 1-year specialisation; and a 3-year course including a Bachelor of Teaching degree. All trainees graduate

with a Diploma of Teaching, Primary, and may seek provisional registration by the Teacher Registration Board. The secondary trainees may choose between the traditional 1-year post-graduate course, and a 4-year concurrent course resulting in a BEd, or a degree with some subject specialisation, as well as a Diploma of Teaching, Secondary.

In the same way as pre-service teacher education is delivered from a wide range of institutions, there is a great deal of variety in the ways in which the providers arrange for and co-ordinate practicum experience for their trainees.

**Figure 1**

*Sources of Teacher Education*

*(Primary and Secondary)*

*31 October 1997*

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## Relevant Literature

The relationship between the traditional providers of pre-service primary education and the normal and model schools was described by Rae Julian (1997). She found that a very close relationship existed between the colleges of education and the normal schools in particular, which were seen as providing models of excellence as examples to the trainees. The schools were very supportive of the trainees and saw the provision of teacher education as one of their basic functions to the extent that it was included in most school charters. Close informal relationships had developed between the colleges and the schools, and the research showed very close links between the pedagogical understandings of the schools and the providers. Julian concluded that—

> Given the proliferation of providers, it appears that more such schools, rather than fewer, are necessary. However, it is also important that the high standards achieved by the current schools are required of the new ones. The initial practical experience of the trainee teachers is vitally important. It is often the most influential factor for them in their own approach to teaching. Although it is important that teacher trainees see a variety of standards of teaching and that they include difficult schools among their practicum experience, they must have examples of excellence against which they can measure the others in order to develop their own personal teaching values. Reflective teachers must have a sound basis for their judgments. (p. 29)

The teaching practicum has been identified by over half of a group of first-year teacher trainees in 1990 as the "key event" so far during their training, in that it helped them to see the relevance of their course work (Renwick & Vize, 1990). The trainees in the latter study were re-interviewed each year during their training and during their first year as teachers. They retained this view throughout the 4 years, and most of them reflected in 1993 that the major focus of their training had been in the classroom. The college of education (COE) was perceived as a place which should have been helping them to cope more effectively in schools (Renwick & Vize, 1993).

Battersby and Ramsay (1990) also studied the practicum experience in New Zealand. They saw the role of the COE as bridging the gap between theory and practice. They found that, at that time, there was little liaison between the college lecturers and the associate teachers in the schools. The teachers perceived the lecturers as out of touch with the realities of the classroom, while the lecturers considered the teachers to be out of date with current theory. The trainees felt that they were coping with a totally divided course, with theory in one compartment and practice in another. The researchers deplored the use of schools as "child banks", places where the trainees could go to obtain experience with minimal involvement from the associate teacher. By 1997, Ramsay had modified this view stating, "Since that [time] . . . many of the providers have moved to close the gap" (Ramsay & Hodder, 1997, p. 34).

Rosemary Dobbins (1996) described the practicum as forming part of the trainee's total "learning journey". She defined the components of a successful practicum, that is, a practicum which is empowering for the trainee teacher, as one which:

- focuses on the classroom, school and community,
- takes account of both intended and unintended learning outcomes that result from a practicum experience,
- provides time for action and reflection,

- allows for individual needs to be met, and
- creates opportunities for collaborative learning situations.

Cruickshank (1990) reports on the work of Turney (1987), who noted that:

> . . . conflicts arise when one member of the student teaching triad (student teacher, cooperating teacher, and college superviser) is excluded, when there is a lack of opportunity to carry out their roles, when there are conflicts that inhibit carrying out their roles, and where there are personality differences, poor communication, and differing views with regard to effective practice. (p. 126)

Since the entry of new providers into the field, even greater attention has been paid to the practicum component of the training. The Teacher Registration Board, which has the responsibility of determining whether a graduate from a training provider has reached a satisfactory standard for teacher registration, is very clear about the requirements for suitable pre-service teaching practice. The Board (1997) has prepared detailed guidelines, and a summary statement:

> Teaching practice experience must be ongoing and integrated into the formal education programme to enable students to critically reflect on the theory and practice of teaching. A wide range of teaching models representing different sizes and organisation of learning centres, different socio-economic environments, and different age groups should be part of the practicum. The practicum must be supervised and assessed by staff of the teacher education institution. The practicum must be in blocks of at least two weeks, and total at least 14 weeks over a three year teacher education programme. If a student is employed in a learning centre, the majority of the practicum time must be in a different centre. (para 1.4)

The New Zealand Educational Institute Te Riu Roa (NZEI, 1997) identified a number of issues of concern arising from the expansion of providers. These included:

- many schools/centres taking students from 3 or 4 different education providers operating different teacher education programmes with different staff and very different approaches;
- the lack of provision in staffing for co-ordination on site or induction of trainees to the requirements of the host schools/centres;
- competition for associate teachers in some areas, resulting in the quality of the associate becoming less important than finding a place.

The Centre for Research on Work, Education and Business at Lincoln University described future scenarios for teacher education (1997). They discuss implications of current changes and project ahead for the next 20 years, contending that—

> . . . teacher education needs to be much more powerfully linked to authentic experience in schools. . . . [future] teachers need to be prepared in something approaching the school context in which they will eventually teach. . . . a process of grounded theory development based on practical experience and supported by the training institution working collaboratively with host schools. (pp. 21-22)

Two recent studies looked at the compressed 1-year primary teacher education programmes which have been introduced by a number of new providers, and their implications for gaining practicum experience. Mansell, Renwick, and Gray (1997) found that "all providers were making an effort to develop closer relationships with schools and acknowledged the vital role of associate and mentor teachers in any programme of teacher education" (p. 16). They also identified a number of issues which arose from the multiplicity of providers in some areas:

- the variation among payments made to the schools, associate and other teachers involved with practicums, which may lead some schools to accept the highest offers;
- the possibility of problems arising from trainees from different providers being managed together, including in the same classroom;
- where there is a mentor or liaison teacher, the associate may become less involved with the trainees and consequently less aware of their needs in the classroom.

Brooker and Millar (1997) found that the associate teachers in their study believed that the trainees from compressed programmes needed "more opportunities to experience a wide range of classroom situations".

Gibbs (1997) states that "most teacher educators claim they aim to produce reflective teachers" (p. 4). Among other questions on this topic, he asks if "teacher educators (and mentor teachers) have the requisite knowledge, skills and dispositions to teach in ways that encourage reflective practices?" (p. 6). A further series of his questions addresses the nature of the partnership relationship between the providers and the schools where practicums are carried out, and the degree of involvement by the schools in planning, evaluating, and reshaping all aspects of the teacher education programme. He wonders how associate teachers are selected, and what happens in the event of a mismatch between the philosophies and styles of the trainee and those of the associate. Gibbs (1997) suggests that:

> In responding in such a proactive way as we [teacher educators] have done, for instance in developing intensive programmes, there is a danger that we may become seduced by our own rhetoric while in reality our practices may well fall short of that which we proclaim. (p. 14)

Partington (1997) included the practicum in his comprehensive study of teacher education in New Zealand. He reported that his review of the literature and his own research had revealed a number of inadequacies in the quality of associate teachers and sometimes little of value accrued to the trainee from the practicum in terms of transmission of theoretical knowledge. This led him to recommend that "the institutions would be well advised to use their own staff as specialist supervisors in their areas of expertise, leaving general supervision to associate teachers" (p.179). Partington's (1997) comments on the practicum were mainly positive, and he concluded:

> Students in teacher education in all places and at all times generally regarded teaching practice as the most important part of their programmes, and all New Zealand's teacher education institutions devote considerable time and effort to ensure practicums are efficient. While there are many reciprocal complaints between the three parties to the practicums (student teachers, associate teachers in the school, and the visiting lecturers) there are far more cases when relationships are smooth. (p. 221)

## Methodology

The current project involved all 10 new providers of teacher education and some of the schools which they used for practicums. Relevant questions from the study of normal and model schools (Julian, 1997) were replicated as much as possible in order to provide comparable data.

To create the school sample, 5 of the providers were selected to give representation of types of programmes, types of institutions, and geographic location. Each respondent was asked to nominate 5 schools which they had used for practicums. From the list of 25 schools, 3 were chosen for each provider, to try to cover a range of deciles and school types. Three additional schools were included later, in order to obtain a greater range of secondary schools.

Telephone interviews were carried out with either the principal or his/her nominee from the schools. The nominee was a liaison or mentor teacher, or the person designated to be in charge of the practicums. The provider interviews were carried out with the person or persons responsible for the organisation of practicums. Some were teleconference interviews, and 2 people were interviewed from one provider, from the primary and secondary programmes.

The results were analysed in order to answer the research questions. The literature, as well as the results of the survey, were useful in interpreting the findings. For example, Turney (Cruickshank, 1990) theorised that conflict may arise between providers and practicum schools through poor communication, misunderstandings, and different views on effective teaching practice. This theory is addressed through an assessment of whether the providers and the schools have common goals for the practicum, and how the goals are reached. The goals of the practicum are suggested as learning about pedagogy, classroom management, curriculum coverage, assessment, teaching specific groups of students (such as Maori, those with special needs, and other ethnic groups), communication with parents, and governance in a school setting.

Where possible, the same questions were put to the provider practicum co-ordinators and to the school respondents, so that the answers could be compared.

# THE PROVIDERS

The new teacher education providers are 5 polytechnics, a university, a whare wananga, and 3 private training establishments. Ramsay and Hodder's (1997) descriptions formed the basis of the selection of providers for the current study. Those chosen were Unitec Institute of Technology, in Auckland, Auckland University, Bethlehem Teachers College near Tauranga, Te Whare Wananga o Awanuiarangi in Whakatane, and the New Zealand Graduate School of Education, Christchurch.[1]

## Unitec Institute of Technology (Unitec)

Unitec has a 1-year course for graduates who can opt for either the primary or secondary part of the course. They have 4 practicums per year, 3 blocks of 3 weeks and 1 of 5 weeks, preceded by 4 Thursdays in the school selected for the practicum. The primary section, whose co-ordinator was the respondent for the current study, established a contractual partnership with 12 schools at the beginning of 1997, but found that, in order to cover rural areas and special purposes, 20 schools were used. The schools covered a range of deciles[2] and ethnicities, with a mix of state, integrated, and private establishments (school type). Geographic factors were taken into account to meet the needs of the trainees.

The co-ordinator worked closely with a liaison teacher at each school. The liaison teacher chose the associates according to the level or curriculum area required by the trainee. Associates were expected to provide guidance to the trainees, while allowing them opportunities to put their theories into practice. The associates had to be up to date with the curriculum, and had to like and be able to communicate with the trainees. No training had been provided for the associates in 1997, but it was planned for 1998.

Unitec had a formal planning meeting each term with the liaison teachers, which was also used for evaluation. The liaison teachers were sent drafts of teaching briefs and learning outcomes for comment. The lecturers visited schools 3 times per practicum for each trainee. Frequent liaison was encouraged between the associate or liaison teachers and the relevant people at Unitec. One of the school principals was on Unitec's programme committee, some teachers were on advisory committees, and trainee selection panels included a principal, a liaison teacher, and an NZEI representative.

In 1997, Unitec paid a lump sum of $1500 per term to the co-ordinator, to be amended in 1998 to $80 per trainee per practicum. Associates were paid the standard allowance of $5.20 per week per trainee, which had been agreed with the NZEI Te Riu Roa as a minimum allowance for primary trainees. An administration fee of $10 per trainee per practicum was paid to the school.

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[1] Since the providers have been described fully in other reports, they are readily identifiable. There seems to be little point in trying to disguise them.

[2] All New Zealand state schools have been allocated a decile rating, based on census data from the area from which each school draws most of its students, along with school ethnicity data. The census data include equivalent household income, parents' occupations and educational qualifications, household crowding, and income support payments received (Ministry of Education, 1996).

## Auckland University

The university also ran a 1-year course for graduates who wanted to do either primary or secondary school training, with a co-ordinator for each section. Both co-ordinators were interviewed for the current study. The trainees had the equivalent of 14½ weeks' practicum experience, as well as an additional 200 hours of school-based training by mentor teachers. Primary trainees spent 3 days per week in the schools throughout the full year, while secondary trainees had done the same but were going to change in 1998 to 1 to 2 days in the schools in the first term, 4 days in terms 2 and 3, and no placement in term 4. In the secondary area, the mentors were subject specialists. The university worked on a contractual basis with a consortium of 37 schools—31 primary and 6 secondary. Members of the consortium were the principal, some senior teachers, and possibly a board of trustees representative from each of the schools. The schools were chosen according to decile ratings, ERO reports, geographic location and school type in order to achieve for the trainees a spread of experiences among schools which were known to be achieving high standards.

The main link with the schools is through the mentors. These are teachers who are selected by the university on the nomination of the schools to guide the trainees, provide 50 percent of the trainees' course work, and assess the practicum. They are chosen on the basis of their academic record, their management experience, and their general qualifications. They do 2 MEd (Tchg) papers, at the university's expense, in methodology and pedagogy, and the mentoring process. The associate teachers are nominated by the mentor and principal as good role models, who must be able to work with adults. They are confirmed "through trial and error". The mentors are responsible for most of the associates' training.

The mentors attend regular course work meetings and have the opportunity to comment on all aspects of the trainee programme. Each mentor works directly with a lecturer who is designated as a co-ordinator for a specific university paper. There is also frequent informal liaison with the overall co-ordinator for primary or secondary trainees. Associates are invited to special occasions at the university. The consortium meets twice a year, in order to be briefed on directions and to discuss course work. News briefs are distributed throughout the consortium.

The university pays release time; time spent with the trainees; travel; and course fees for the mentor teacher. Associates are paid slightly above the standard rate, and a fee is paid to the school to cover consumable items.

## Bethlehem Teachers College

Bethlehem Teachers College is a private provider, with a Christian perspective. The college has a 3-year course for primary trainees and a 1-year graduate course for secondary trainees, based on New Testament principles. There are 3 practicums per year, one of which must be in a state school. The teachers college has a close relationship with Bethlehem College, with every trainee attached to a master teacher at the school, following the model of discipleship. All staff at the teachers college and the school are considered to be part of a "development continuum for teaching practice". Each lecturer links to a group of state schools which have agreed to participate in practicums. The state schools, chosen to cover a range of ethnicity and deciles, are not currently contracted but this is planned for 1998.

Communication with the state school is mainly between the relevant lecturer and associate

teachers, unless the school has appointed a liaison teacher. Associates are chosen by the trainee from a bank of names and supplementary information covering class levels, special interests, gender and age, furnished by the principal. Every teacher at the campus school is included with practicums. The teachers college provides a handbook to the state associates, outlining the college's expectations of the school. Teachers at the campus school attend fortnightly meetings. The trainees set goals for each practicum, which are conveyed to the schools by the relevant lecturers.

The lecturers maintain close contact with the school during the practicums, with each trainee receiving up to 3 visits. The associates are invited to afternoon tea to meet the trainees before the practicum, and to an annual concert at the teachers college. Representatives of the primary and secondary principals, as well as teacher union representatives, sit on the 2 programme committees.

Bethlehem Teachers College pays the standard allowance to its associate teachers, with a lower payment to the master teachers at the campus school.

## Te Whare Wananga o Awanuiarangi

Te Whare Wananga o Awanuiarangi provides a 3-year course for primary trainees, similar to the pre-1997 curriculum at the Auckland College of Education, but with more emphasis on te reo Maori and generally based on tikanga Maori. The programme is bilingual but most courses are currently conducted in English. The practicums are 6 weeks for year 1 trainees, 7 weeks for year 2, and 8 weeks for year 3. At least 1 practicum is spent in a kura kaupapa or in a bilingual classroom. There is a co-ordinator for each course. Local schools were invited to participate, and the co-ordinators hope to sign memorandums of understanding with each school in 1998.

Communication with the school is mainly through the principal. Prospective associate teachers volunteer to the principal who then offers the chosen people to the whare wananga. The trainees choose an associate according to their requirements. A practicum booklet is provided, and is discussed between the lecturer and associate before the practicum.

There is weekly contact between the lecturers and the trainees during the practicums. Associates are invited to the whare wananga from time to time to discuss the programme or for social occasions. A principal sits on each of the advisory committees.

The whare wananga pays the standard allowance to its associate teachers.

## The New Zealand Graduate School of Education (NZGSE)

The NZGSE provides a 1-year course for primary and secondary trainees, which may be extended for trainees who have not met all of the course requirements. The course is based on the theory that obtaining control in the classroom precedes any learning, hence there is a strong emphasis on behaviour management. Each trainee has an individual programme, based on a set of competencies. The teaching staff attend the practicums full time with trainees, for a total of 28 weeks per year. There is a co-ordinator for each division, who has a verbal agreement with each of the schools used for practicums. The schools are chosen from the low decile group, with the main criteria being that they must be prepared to have the lecturers "around all of the time, for 7 weeks at a stretch". Each school must agree to take a small group of trainees for each practicum period. The co-ordinator reported that there was no difficulty in finding suitable schools.

Communication with the schools is directly between the lecturers and the associate teachers,

unless the school has appointed a liaison teacher. Associates are chosen by the schools, with no particular specifications by the provider. There is no special training for the associates, since the lecturers see themselves as providing professional development to both the trainees and the associates in the classroom as necessary.

Contact with the schools is continual during the practicum. The lecturers visit at least every second day, starting from 8.30 a.m. in order to discuss the programme. The associates have been provided with pagers and are encouraged to call the lecturer at any time. Regular meetings are held with the associates, according to need. A principal sits on each of the advisory committees.

The NZGSE pays the standard allowance to associate teachers.

## Assessment of the Trainees

All of the providers regarded the assessment of the practicum as extremely important. Methods of assessment were very different. All had devised their own systems, with varying levels of input from the practicum schools.

### Unitec

Unitec assesses its trainees according to criteria set by an advisory board, which has a school principal among its members. When the programme for the practicum has been developed, competencies are determined, based on learning outcomes, and specified curricular-related tasks. All arise from the New Zealand Qualifications Authority's (NZQA) Unit Standards for Teacher Education.

The associate is sent a report form, with the competencies to be met by the trainee. The lecturer also does a report, based on his/her observation. The trainee does an appraisal, then all 3 meet to discuss the various assessments. At that meeting goals are set for the next practicum. Trainees who do not reach an 85 percent level in each competency have to revise the areas of shortfall and make up the deficit, maybe during the pre-practicum Thursdays. If they are deemed *not yet competent*, the matter goes to review and a decision is made on further action. Results of assessments are sent to a programme committee, which then reports to a faculty committee monitoring academic records.

### Auckland University

The university bases its assessment on the Berliner model, described by Gibbs (1997):

> . . . psychometric methods to quantify teaching effectiveness in terms of learning achievement. Teachers were trained in specific methods to produce certain outcomes, and to act in particular ways to manage children.

Schools were consulted as part of the initial development of the system. Trainees are assessed on their provision of opportunities for children to learn. The mentors are trained to apply the system, in consultation with the associate. All topics are assessed, firstly under subcategories, then as part of the overall outcome which has been determined for that aspect of the practicum, and are given a grade. The results are sent to the university where they are moderated. Any topics with low rankings are singled out for special attention at the next practicum. The trainees also do

a university paper on reflective practice, which they use for self-monitoring.

The process of weekly observation of the trainees was described in detail by one of the mentors:

> I have a sheet of paper with 3 columns. In the first, I record what is happening, eg '14 students watching, 3 looking out the window, 2 exchanging notes'. After the lesson I ask the trainee if he recalls a similar event and record the response in the second column. The third column has the trainee's ideas on how to resolve the situation—a negotiated way of improving practice. We are taught to 'Be a mirror, not a magnifying glass'.

The full written report is a 10-page document with 16 headings, or indicators, covering areas such as *planning, preparation, evidence of learning outcomes,* and *engagement in successful learning.* The mentors tick boxes for each along a scale of *always, usually, sometimes,* and *frequently unclear.*

### Bethlehem Teachers College

The Bethlehem process has been developed by a Board of Examiners attached to the college. They measure the trainee against a continuum of development, using year levels as a common referent, that is, a year 2 trainee is measured against others in the same year. The lecturers look at interactive teaching and recordkeeping, ranking each as *highly competent, very competent, competent, needs some help,* and *needs much help.* The subcategories of interactive teaching are *planning, communication, ability to handle groups, professional role, including management for each level,* and *assessment and evaluation.*

Reports are received from the associate and from the trainee, along with 2 to 3 reports from the lecturers, which may include videotapes. All are put together with the academic transcript from the Board of Examiners to make up the trainee's personal professional profile, which is made available to prospective employers as an assessment of the trainee's teaching competency.

### Te Whare Wananga o Awanuiarangi

The whare wananga assesses the specific tasks set out in the teaching brief by the lecturers.

At the end of the practicum the associate writes a report, which is combined with the lecturer's assessment over a period of time. The trainees have also done an evaluation which they discuss with the lecturer.

### New Zealand Graduate School of Education

The NZGSE assesses according to the NZQA unit standards. There is an assessment at the end of each practicum, where the trainees must produce both written records (data from associates, or samples of children's work) and video evidence of their achievements. This is marked by the lecturers, who have also formed their own judgments from their regular interaction with the trainees. The trainees apply for either a full or partial credit. The assessment period is also used to decide on future professional goals. The provider sees this formative assessment as a major way to "help us to fast-track our trainees".

The trainee may ask the associate to comment on a lesson, but this is not essential. If the trainee is likely to complete the course, then the school principal will be asked to be an assessor. Peer assessment is also used.

# THE PROVIDERS' VIEWS OF THE PRACTICUM

## Definition

Each of the providers was asked for their definition of a teaching practicum. While there were some semantic differences, 4 of the 5 tended to have similar understandings.

> An opportunity for students to become part of the culture of the classroom, to observe current practice and apply theories, to form a collegial relationship with fellow trainees and teachers, to apply planning and management theory to a real context, and to develop relationships with children.

> An extension of their course work—the 2 are interrelated. Opportunities of a more prolonged nature than the course to plan and evaluate as part of a professional development continuum across 3 years. The overarching goal is to practise reflective practice, with self-evaluation against ideas from the course.

> To get the practical experience that goes with the theory which we provide. Getting an overall view of what happens in schools.

> An opportunity for the student in training to practise a variety of skills, working with school students in a real classroom.

One provider had a different view; the relationship between the school and the provider was considered to be much more integrated than the relationship described by the other providers:

> A partnership between the school and university, not top-down, nor an apprenticeship where trainees are put in schools and left. The partnership includes the governance of the course . . . the Board of Studies, the [course] management committee, and mentors with university paper co-ordinators over preparation of the papers.

# THE SCHOOLS

## Description of the Sample

Seven secondary and 11 primary schools were included within the sample. The primary section were all state schools, with 2 intermediates. Two secondary schools were private, and 2 were single-sex schools. Eleven schools were decile 5 or below. The secondary schools tended to be large, with rolls ranging from 620–1960 students, while the primary schools were evenly spread between 227–800 students. Staff entitlements covered a similarly wide range, from 11–110. Most of the secondary teachers had degrees and teaching diplomas. The primary school teachers tended to have lower qualifications than those in the normal and model schools (Julian, 1997), as is shown in table 1.

**Table 1**

*Qualifications of Teachers*

| Qualification | Current Sample % | Normal % | Model % |
|---|---|---|---|
| Dip Tchg, TT Cert | 57 | 35 | 28 |
| Undergrad diploma, part degree, Higher DipTchg | 7 | 12 | 12 |
| Degree, AdvDipTchg | 36 | 52 | 60 |
| Other | - | 1 | - |

Since most of the new providers in the sample chose schools to cover a range of deciles and ethnic groups, it is not valid to compare these schools with the normal and model schools. Some of the traditional providers who used mainly the normal and model schools commented that they found it difficult to provide their trainees with experience with Maori students (Julian, 1997), but, in the current sample, only 5 schools had under 10 percent Maori students, while 3 schools had 20 percent or more Pacific Island students and 3 had a similar proportion of Asian students. Four schools had no Pacific Island students and 3 had no Asian students. These results are summarised in table 2.

**Table 2**

*Ethnicity of Students: Incidence of Schools*

| Ethnicity | % Range of Students | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 0–19 | 20–39 | 40–59 | 60–79 | 80–100 |
| Pakeha | 2 | 3 | 2 | 5 | 6 |
| Maori | 13 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| Pacific Island | 15 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Asian | 15 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Other | 17 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

## Number of Providers with Trainees at Each School in 1997

Only 4 of the 18 schools had worked with only 1 provider in 1997. Another 6 had worked with 2 providers, usually the new one and their local college or school of education (COE, SOE). The 7 secondary schools were more likely to work with multiple providers: 2 had 3, 2 had 4, and 1 had trainees from 5 providers during 1997. One primary school reported receiving trainees from 6 different institutions! Since most of the schools were located in the Auckland and Bay of Plenty regions, where there are 7 and 4 providers respectively, it is hardly surprising that there is a high demand on the local schools for practicum placements.

The providers included all of those with bases in the regions covered by the study, as shown in figure 1. However, there were also a few placements from Wellington and Dunedin COEs. Three of the Auckland schools also had trainees from Sweden and Denmark. The new providers, with the exception of Auckland University, had placed trainees only in the schools which they had nominated for the study, while the university also had trainees in 2 of the schools nominated by other providers for the study. Auckland COE had trainees in 10 of the sample schools. One respondent commented that the local COE would not allow their trainees to be placed in the same classroom as those from the new provider, so the staff had chosen to work with the new provider.

## Number of Trainees

The schools were asked how many trainees they had had during the first 2 terms of 1997. Not surprisingly, the primary school which had had trainees from 6 different institutions, while also working closely with its local new provider, could only respond "many". Five of the primary schools were used in a similar way to the normal and model schools by the new providers, having a large number of trainees for model and demonstration lessons as well as those for full practicums. The numbers of schools and providers are shown in table 3.

**Table 3**

*Number of Trainees and Providers: Incidence of Schools*

| | Total Providers | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Total Trainees | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 1–9 | 3 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| 10–19 | 2 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| 20–29 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| 30–39 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| 40–49 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| 50+ | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

## Payments to Schools To Reimburse Costs of Practicums

The responses to this question confirmed the information given by the providers, as described in the previous section of this report. Most of the traditional providers paid the standard associate teachers' allowance, with one paying a higher rate for associates and additional payments for co-ordinators and placement tutors, and another paying an additional sum for consumable items.

Information was also given for 2 new providers not included within the current study. One paid a lump sum for curriculum mentors, lead teachers, and for teacher release to cover tuition time with the trainees, in addition to the standard associate allowance. The other paid the standard associate allowance and a payment to cover ACC costs.

## Choice of Staff To Work with Trainees

The schools were asked if there were any special criteria to do with teacher education which they applied when selecting staff. About a third of the schools (compared with all of the normal and model schools) replied that participation in practicums was a factor, especially for senior applicants.

All of the schools had selection criteria for choice of associate teachers. Most of the secondary schools, after matching subject requirements, asked for volunteers from their fully registered teachers. The heads of departments, some of whom had sought feedback from previous trainees, made the final selection. A number of the primary schools compiled a list of suitable associates and allowed the providers to make the placements, sometimes at the trainees' requests.

Auckland University made the final choice of mentors, from names submitted by the schools.

The criteria applied were similar to those mentioned by the normal and model schools: communication skills, including ability to analyse practice; ability to model professional teaching and behaviour management; experience; organisational skills; willingness to support trainees; and area specialisation. Some of the primary schools tried to offer a range of teaching styles to prospective trainees.

## Professional Development

All of the schools had professional development plans. These covered a wide range of topics from curriculum areas and assessment topics to management-related themes. Most of the schools included trainee teachers in the professional development if the development occurred at a time when they were present and if it was convenient for them to attend. Four schools stated that the trainees were not included within the school's professional development work. One school, on the other hand, invited trainees from the new provider to the school's teacher-only days.

# RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE PROVIDERS

Questions about the providers covered all providers who had used the schools for practicums in 1997. This afforded opportunities for comparisons among providers, as well as comparisons between the responses from the schools and the providers included within the sample. The primary school responses could also be compared with those from the normal and model schools for the same questions (Julian, 1997).

## Preparation for Practicums

The schools' perceptions of the trainees' preparedness for the practicums varied greatly for each provider. One new provider was rated *very well* by all 3 respondents. They said that:

> They know the school well and understand its philosophy. The students [trainees] are expected to be like teacher aides, and are told, 'if you are lucky, you will be allowed to take a class'. They are enthusiastic, will do anything. They get close support from their tutors. [Combined response]

Another provider was rated mainly *very well.* The schools said that the trainees were highly motivated, which they attributed to the provider's special philosophy.

Two of the other new providers were considered to have had a variable start, but, due to the level of consultation between them and the schools, the providers had made amendments to the programmes, which had resulted in trainees being better prepared for later practicums. The system of trainees attending the school for a number of days prior to the practicum was felt to be a useful preparation time. Another provider was considered to have improved in 1997, after the appointment of new lecturers.

The traditional providers received some criticism. It was alleged by some schools that they "had become too complacent", taking less trouble to communicate with the schools than the newer providers. Concern was also expressed that the calibre of trainees from the traditional providers appeared to have become less consistent—"they seem to take whoever applies". Other schools, however, were comfortable with their local COE, since they had been working together for a long time, and each knew what to expect from the other.

Two of the new providers not included within the current sample were also mentioned. Both provided 1-year courses for secondary trainees. The trainees from one of these providers had a preliminary pre-practicum contact week at the school, which was felt to be a useful model. The trainees from this provider and the other new one outside the sample were considered to be of *variable* calibre. Some had limited or out-of-date subject knowledge, and others had English language difficulties.

## Special Roles of Teachers Working with the Trainees

The new providers had worked out a number of variations on the standard practicum, where the trainees worked with one or more associate teachers, and the school appointed one of the senior staff to act as liaison teacher or co-ordinator of the practicums. All of the providers retained the links with associate teachers, with some variations on their title, such as supervising teacher, or master teacher. The role of these teachers was to take the trainees into their classrooms, affording

them the opportunities to observe the associate, discuss their observations, and practise teaching at some level, depending on the stage they had reached in their overall course. The associates also provided guidance and general feedback to the trainees, and comments to the provider on the trainees' progress.

Most schools also had co-ordinators or liaison teachers. Their role was to organise the practicums, acting as a link between the school and the provider.

Mentors, curriculum mentors, placement tutors, and master teachers were innovative additions to the pre-service training model. The mentors act as liaison between the provider and the associate. They provide in-service training and guidance to the trainee during the practicum, helping with lesson planning, research reports, and getting resources. They observe lessons taught by the trainee and give informal feedback, as well as preparing the final report at the end of the practicum. They are seen as "forming the bridge between theory and practice". The curriculum mentors, or lead teachers, perform similar functions, and are expected to provide all of the subject content to the trainees. Placement tutors operated for another secondary programme, where the trainees were placed in schools for 3 days a week in ten 3-week blocks during the year. The tutors helped with assignments, and with general subject aspects of the trainees' work.

## Time Spent with the Trainees During the Practicums

There appeared to be little difference between the time that associate teachers spent with the trainees in the current study compared with that reported in the evaluation of normal and model schools (Julian, 1997). However, the new level of involvement afforded by the mentor-type teachers meant that the schools spent considerably more time with the trainees from some of the new providers than they did with those from the traditional providers. The ranges were:

- associate teacher: 2–5 hours per week per trainee, with 2 providers needing 10 hours;
- liaison teacher/co-ordinator: 2–5 hours per week per trainee;
- mentor/lead teacher/master teacher: 2–5 hours per week, on the whole, but since some secondary mentors worked with trainees on practicum at different schools, their time taken was impossible to assess accurately;
- principal: 1–2 hours per week for all trainees in their school.

## Special Training for Teachers Associated with the Practicums

Two of the new providers and 2 of the traditional providers were seen as providing some training for associate teachers. The training was mainly annual meetings to discuss the provider's aims and objectives for the year, or meetings before the practicums to explain what was required of the associate. One new provider had made technology courses available to the associates. Some providers had produced practicum booklets. One school respondent commented, "we train them [the lecturers]".

Training of the mentor teachers working with Auckland University is discussed above. In addition to the mentor training, university staff were available to work with pre-registered teachers at the schools within the consortium. The curriculum mentors received no special training for the role. Master teachers attended training at the university for 1 hour per fortnight.

Most of the liaison teachers and co-ordinators attended meetings with the various new providers with whom they worked.

## Consultation about Programmes within the Institution

Three of the new providers were seen as involving their schools very closely with their programmes. This occurred through frequent meetings with relevant school staff members, through teacher membership on advisory committees to the providers, or through the constant presence of lecturers in the classroom, which resulted in a great deal of informal discussion of the programmes. Few schools, however, said that they were consulted by the traditional providers who supplied them with trainees. This may be because these providers saw their closest ties as being with the normal schools, which reported that they had frequent discussions and close links with the traditional providers (Julian, 1997).

## Feedback from Practicums

Four of the 5 new providers in the sample provided feedback to the schools after the practicums. The information was used to assist planning for future trainees. The feedback came through formal meetings or through informal telephone calls or comments. The new provider who was not seen as giving feedback was seen as going through a process of change and had been found to be open to comment. Few traditional providers were said to give feedback on the practicums to the schools in the current sample, although they were reported by the normal and model schools as giving regular feedback (Julian, 1997). One of the new providers not included within the sample was seen as providing no feedback to the schools.

## Teachers Lecturing at the Institution

Teachers assisted with the programmes for most of the new providers. One relied on the schools to provide teachers in their out-of-school time for most of the curriculum content of the provider's work. Some of the teachers from the schools in the current sample lectured for the traditional providers, although this was reported less frequently than it was by the teachers in the normal schools (Julian, 1997).

# GOALS OF THE PRACTICUM: SCHOOLS AND PROVIDERS

A set of 7 possible goals of the practicum was suggested to the co-ordinators and to the schools. One provider suggested an eighth, "communication with peers—providing effective collegial support and relationships with other adults". When the respondents were asked to rank the goals in order of importance, some providers felt that a number were of equal value.

Those providers who could not separate the goals felt that they were interdependent, and that management was linked to the curriculum, and to teaching specific groups. *Curriculum coverage* and *assessment* were considered by most respondents to be part of the same goal, with assessment, or measurement of learning outcomes, an essential element of teaching any part of the *curriculum*. *Classroom management* was seen by some as the most important goal in that it included all of the others when interpreted in its broadest sense. Most said that *communication with parents*, and learning about *school governance* were of lesser importance, and should occur developmentally towards the end of their training programmes.

The schools and providers differed a little in their ideas on the importance of the various goals of the practicum, especially *pedagogy*, as shown by table 4. They also differed in that the school respondents were more definite in their rankings, while the providers were more likely to consider some goals to be of equal importance. This is demonstrated by the closeness between some of the total rankings in table 4, which were reached by adding the raw ranking scores allotted by the individual respondents to each item.

**Table 4**

*Goals of the Practicum*

| | Total Rankings | | Overall Rankings | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Schools | Providers | Schools | Providers |
| Classroom management | 23 | 5 | 1 | 1 |
| Curriculum coverage | 29 | 11 | 2 | 4 |
| Assessment | 58 | 9 | 3 | 2= |
| Pedagogy | 62 | 9 | 4 | 2= |
| Teaching specific groups | 69 | 13 | 5 | 5 |
| Communication with parents | 102 | 26 | 6 | 6 |
| School governance | 112 | 29 | 7 | 7 |

When the providers are matched with the schools which they nominated as practicum schools, there is very little correlation in their ranking of goals. The only frequent agreements are over the placing of *communication with parents*, and *school governance* at the end of the list, and *classroom management* as the most important goal of the practicum. It is interesting to note, however, that a provider who attached overall importance to *classroom management*, sent trainees to a school where *classroom management* was ranked third in importance as well as to other schools where it was ranked first.

## What Did the Providers Expect of the Schools in Order To Reach the Goals of the Practicum?

There was little difference among the providers, who had similar expectations of schools in order to reach the practicum goals. Any differences arose from the special character of the training establishment

### Pedagogy

Apart from Auckland University, where the mentors delivered part of the programme, the providers expected the associates to act as role models for the trainees. They were also required to explain and discuss their teaching, so that the trainees could relate it to a theoretical context.

### Classroom Management

This was seen as a chance for the trainee to try out strategies, to observe and discover a variety of teaching styles. The associate was expected to give feedback and explanations to the trainee.

### Curriculum Coverage

Trainees were expected to be able to cover all parts of the curriculum at different levels over the full period of their practicums. Secondary trainees needed the opportunity to work in their subject specialisation areas, as well as any areas of minor specialisation.

### Assessment

The co-ordinators wanted the trainees to find out the school's policies and practices, and the links between assessment and planning. Most expected the trainees to have opportunities to try out both formative and summative assessment, and to show that they had planned lessons, including measuring whether the learning objectives of that lesson had been met.

### Teaching Specific Groups

Some providers selected their schools to cover different specific groups of students. Maori students were seen as an essential target group for the whare wananga, which ensured that their trainees went to a kura kaupapa and to bilingual classes. Most providers expected the trainees to see students from different ethnic groups, including those with English as a second language.

Students with special needs and abilities were also included among practicum requirements.

### Communication with Parents

Only one provider saw this as sufficiently important to make a special requirement. The others said that the trainees saw parents by chance, if the parents happened to be at the school, or if there was a Parent Teacher Association meeting which the trainee wanted to attend.

### Governance

Governance was usually covered through talks by the principal or senior staff, or through attendance at staff meetings. One provider set attendance at a board of trustees meeting as a special assignment.

## What the Schools Provided for the Trainees in Order To Reach the Goals

### Pedagogy

Most of the schools said that they provided opportunities for trainees to observe their theoretical training being practised through a variety of methods and strategies. The associates were expected to discuss and explain their philosophies. One principal explained it as "developing a shared language".

### Classroom Management

The associates were considered to be role models for the trainees. They explained and discussed their methods of management, and allowed the trainees to try out their own ideas, then provided feedback and suggestions.

### Curriculum Coverage

The schools provided trainees with the curriculum documents in their areas of interest, as well as giving the trainees chances to teach, especially within any areas of specialisation, or in order to cover assignment topics. Some primary schools had subject resource teachers, who made time available as required. The heads of departments in secondary schools operated in a similar way.

### Assessment of School Students

Assessment was seen as an essential part of lesson preparation by a number of schools, a way of testing whether the learning outcomes had been achieved. They gave the trainees opportunities to use assessment and evaluation techniques, and included them within any overall assessment exercises, such as school reports. The schools linked to 2 of the providers said that assessment did not seem to be a major goal for their trainees, so the schools did not place a major emphasis on that area.

### Teaching Specific Groups

All of the schools pointed out the range of groups with which trainees had a chance to work at their schools. Most had students with special needs in mainstream classrooms, as well as extension groups, ESL students, and a range of ethnic groups. There were a number of bilingual units, and one total immersion class.

### Communication with Parents

Most schools did not see this as a high priority, but they pointed out that the trainees saw parents as chances arose, if the parents were in the classroom, or the trainees chose to go to a parent/teacher meeting with their associate. Three schools encouraged the trainees to practise communication with the parents. One explained:

> . . . before and after school, the teachers all go out to talk to the parents when they deliver and pick up the children. We expect the trainees to do likewise.

### School Governance

Governance was covered mainly during the principal's discussion with the trainees. Three schools allowed the trainees to attend board of trustee meetings.

## Matching Between What Providers Expected and What Schools Did

The study of normal and model schools (Julian, 1997) showed a very close relationship between the schools' provision for trainees and the expectations of the traditional providers, even to the extent of using similar language. No such correlation could be found in the current study, apart from the expectations that the trainees would get the chance to observe, discuss, teach, and receive feedback. This was possibly because most of the schools were working with a number of providers, and therefore had to meet the differing requirements of each provider.

The only close matches were between Auckland University and the schools which they used for practicums. Most of the research respondents were mentors and used the language that they had developed at the university as part of the regular interaction with the lecturers in order to reach a common understanding.

## Trainee Participation in Extracurricular Activities

Trainees' participation in extracurricular activities tended to depend on their particular interests and their available time. Those who did not spend full weeks at the schools had to combine their school requirements with those of the provider, which did not seem to leave much time for non-essential activities. One provider encouraged the trainees to participate, and the schools welcomed their enthusiasm. Some schools which were located close to the providers found that trainees came back in their own time, for example to coach sport.

## Evidence of Positive Outcomes from Participation in Teacher Education

Most of the schools reported positive informal feedback from the practicums from both trainees and providers. They cited the growing requests for placements from trainees and providers, job applications from former trainees, and return visits from former trainees, either to give voluntary help or for social reasons, as evidence of satisfaction.

The Education Review Office had commented briefly on the role played in teacher education for 2 of the schools. The other schools which had already received reviews said that it had not been mentioned in their review reports.

# ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES TO THE SCHOOLS FROM ASSISTANCE WITH PRE-SERVICE TEACHER EDUCATION

The schools saw far more advantages than disadvantages arising from their provision of practicums. The responses are very similar to those given by the normal and model schools (Julian, 1997).

## Advantages

### Students

Students were considered to benefit from the presence of another adult in the class, who served as another role model. Primary school respondents saw particular advantages if the trainee was male, since they had few male teachers. Maori students and those from other ethnic groups were considered to benefit from the presence of trainees of the same ethnicity. One school, for example, commented on how much their Tongan students had enjoyed interacting with Tongan trainees. The students experienced fresh ideas and new enthusiasm, which added quality to their programmes. They liked the out-of-class contact. The students also received more individual attention. The schools with a high proportion of Maori students and few Maori teachers explained the value of getting Maori trainees:

> Some of our children are socially disadvantaged, starved for language—they zero in on them [the trainees] . . . They like the special skills, sport, kapa haka. More Maori role models—there is only one on the staff and 31 percent of the students are Maori.

### Teachers

Teachers were also seen as benefiting from the new ideas and fresh directions contributed by the students. Through being observed, they were kept alert and challenged, while being forced to reflect on their teaching styles and strategies. They had another person to share their interests with, someone who may contribute new or specialised knowledge in the teacher's area of specialisation. One principal said that the trainees raised the level of the staff meetings, in that the meetings tended to take on a pedagogical focus. The teachers liked helping trainees, and observing their development. They found that contact with the lecturers and the provider establishments helped their professional development. Two respondents commented that the experience with less able trainees made the students appreciate their teachers.

### Schools

The respondents felt that the whole school benefited from the professional focus of the trainees. The school had to learn new management styles, and how to operate in a wider professional environment. Participation in teacher education was a good "selling point" for the school, in that the trainees compared experiences and were likely to apply for positions in schools where they or their friends had had positive experiences. Some schools said that they often recruited new teachers from among their trainees, having had a direct opportunity to see them in action. They

felt that it was positive for the school to be seen as supporting teacher education and affirmatory for the school to be seen as doing well in an innovative climate. One school saw the trainees as providing a link between the school and the local Maori community.

## Disadvantages

All but 2 schools felt that there were some disadvantages to them, or problems arising from their participation in the practicums. These related mainly to problems with individual trainees, who may have had poor management skills so that the class was disrupted. There were personality clashes with some trainees whose expectations of the programme differed from those of the associates. Some trainees needed a lot of help due to lack of initiative or lack of other skills, while others were unreliable, not keeping commitments.

Administrative pressures also caused problems, especially when there was an overload of trainees. One principal described it as "a lot of work for little remuneration".

Some schools mentioned the variability among the different providers, especially the potential conflict arising from the different levels of remuneration for the same job. A private school pointed out that parents who paid for their children to attend the school expected them to get a consistent level of quality teaching.

# COMMENTS ON RECENT CHANGES IN TEACHER EDUCATION

Most respondents commented on their relationship with the providers with whom they worked. They then went on to make general comments about their perceptions of the current state of teacher education.

## Current Providers

Most of the new providers in the sample received praise from the schools with which they worked. The comments below are combined, from all of their practicum schools:

> **Unitec:** Good background and training—good for children. . . . There is more process in their course structure [than the traditional providers]—putting theory into context.. . . Good papers on managing children's learning.. . . Some hiccups but making an effort to overcome them.. . . Good positive contacts.
>
> **Auckland University:** Going to be a quality provider, producing teachers with mana, highly trained and with degrees—better image. . . . Teachers appreciate the level of involvement, especially the consortium and the mentor system, and the constant feedback. . . . Good that mentors and co-ordinator are practising teachers. . . . The most rigorous [of 5 providers].
>
> **Bethlehem Teachers College:** Good model, hope to sustain it. Not much different from [the traditional provider].
>
> **Te Whare Wananga o Awanuiarangi:** At first, poor quality of lecturing. Now, 100 percent improvement. Targets specific needs. Good if standards maintained. Good liaison. . . . Some poor quality students, especially short course.
>
> **New Zealand Graduate School of Education:** Small, can attract best [trainees], rejects a lot. In-service model, continuous feedback, learning from experiences, and quality checking. . . . They [lecturers] know their trainees very well. A four-way partnership—tutor/principal/supervising teacher/trainee. The trainee is a true professional by the end of the practicum.

Comments about the traditional providers tended to focus on their size, and their remoteness from their trainees. The schools thought that the liaison with these providers was of a lesser quality. Two were seen as making unreasonable demands, including a desire to be the sole supplier of trainees.

## General Comments

Most of the schools commented on the proliferation of providers of pre-service teacher education. They were concerned that standards should be maintained and that there should be adequate quality control. They would want to know about the quality of the new providers (other than the ones they worked with) before appointing teachers from them. As one principal said:

> I am worried about the proliferation, the effect of needing money and filling seats from the EFTS [Equivalent Full Time Students funding scheme].They might take underqualified people. Some qualifications may be of lesser value. I need to know the standards before employing them.

Some respondents mentioned the problems caused for the schools which took trainees from a number of providers, all with different timetables and varying demands. One suggested that there should be some form of co-ordination among providers. An Auckland secondary teacher co-ordinator suggested that:

> There might be too many trying to do the same thing. This makes high demands on the school, especially as some want to stay for long periods.

Over half of the schools made positive comments. They felt that the new providers forced the traditional providers to re-examine and improve their practices, in response to the extra competition. They would also have to be more accountable for their programmes. Some thought that the different perspectives provided by diversity was a good thing. Advantages were perceived in the training of more Maori teachers, and in training being more available to mature people. Concern was also expressed that the private providers were subjected to unfair (NZQA) standards and should also get greater funding. One respondent had strong views:

> The old model is faulty, stale, and inadequate. Pedagogy is not linked to practice.

# DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

> It appears from the research that the main differences between the normal and model schools, and the other schools that provide practicums, is the focus on pre-service teacher education. (Julian, 1997, p. 27)

The evaluation of the normal and model schools (Julian, 1997) found that these schools considered the practicums to be part of their core business. This was not the case for the schools in the current sample, but they were found to consider, on balance, that there were more advantages than disadvantages to their school through the provision of practicums.

The current study contrasted with the previous one (Julian, 1997) in that it addressed the issue of the practicums mainly from the perspective of the providers. The schools were interviewed, not in order to do an evaluation, but rather to ascertain their views on changes to the practicum experience which had arisen from their relationships with some of the new providers of teacher education. These new providers, and their approach to practicums, were the main focus of the study.

## The Research Questions

### Selection of Schools and Teachers Who Assist with the Practicums

The providers select schools mainly in order to cover a range of socioeconomic deciles as determined by the Ministry of Education (1996), a range of school types, and of ethnic groups. The providers thus all comply with the Teacher Registration Board guidelines (1997). Geographic factors are also taken into account, in order to meet the needs of the trainees. This contrasts with the normal schools which were chosen by the then Department of Education for their proximity to the traditional provider. One of the few criticisms of the normal schools was that very few of them were in the lower decile range (Julian, 1997).

Associate teachers were chosen mainly by the schools, some of which made a list available to the providers, so that they could match associates and trainees according to the trainee's requirements for the practicum. Assisting with practicums was seldom a relevant factor in the appointment of teachers to the school, in contrast to the normal and model schools, where it was found to be a criterion (Julian, 1997).

Some of the new providers had introduced different systems of linking theory to practice. The most innovative of these was the establishment of mentor teachers, who provided some of the theoretical training for the trainees within the school setting, and assumed the primary role for the guidance and assessment of the trainees during the practicums. The mentors were selected by the provider from nominations by the schools. A number of variations on this model had also been introduced by other providers, such as curriculum mentors, lead teachers, and master teachers. Liaison teachers also played a major role between one provider and its associated schools.

## Financial and Training Contributions by the Providers

Most of the new providers paid the standard associate teachers allowance of $5.20 per week per trainee. Some also paid an extra sum per practicum to cover the costs of consumable items used by the trainees. These payments were similar to those made by most of the traditional providers. Two providers made additional payments, one making a payment to the co-ordinator, and another paying a higher allowance to the associates. The latter provider also paid a number of the special trainee-related costs of the mentor teachers, including university fees for 2 papers, release time, travel costs, and an allowance for time spent with the trainees. The variation among the payments was mentioned by a number of schools, especially those who worked with 2 or more different providers, as a contentious issue for their teachers.

The mentor teachers were the only teachers who received a substantial training input from the new providers. Most of the associates were given practicum handbooks which explained the provider's expectations of the schools, and a number of providers held optional meetings for associates, either annually or before the practicums.

While none of the schools in the current sample mentioned receiving specific training from the traditional providers with whom they worked, about a third of the associate teachers at the normal and model schools attended courses at their local colleges of education (Julian, 1997).

## The Relationship Between the New Providers and the Practicum Schools

The relationship between the new providers and their associated schools varied according to the degree of contact between them. Two providers had formed partnerships with the schools, with close liaison over programmes, planning of practicums, assessment of trainees, and involvement of the teachers in the work of the provider, including representation on provider committees. The lecturers at another provider were based at the schools during the practicums which led to constant communication and clear understanding of each other's philosophies. The other 2 providers had less formal contact with their practicum schools, with the exception of the school that shared a campus with its provider and was seen as part of the same institution.

There was not the same close correlation between the providers' and schools' interpretation of the goals of the practicum as there was for the normal and model schools and the traditional providers (Julian, 1997). The expectations of the providers and practice of the schools towards reaching the goals coincided for areas such as observation and discussion of the associate's teaching practice, and giving the trainee opportunities to teach and to receive feedback on the lessons. Apart from the mentor teachers and their provider, the language used by the providers was markedly different from that of the school respondents. Concepts such as reflection, which were mentioned by most providers, were not part of most of the school respondents' vocabulary during the interviews.

Most of the schools worked with both new and traditional providers. In general, they reported having developed closer relationships with the new providers than with the traditional providers.

## Perceived Effect of the Practicum Experience on the Schools

All of the schools made positive comments about their relationships with the new providers. They saw mainly benefits to the schools from the involvement with the trainees, especially from the input of new ideas and enthusiasm. Some of the new providers were perceived as having worked on resolving problems which arose during the early practicums, with positive results.

Some negative comments were made, mainly about variability of standards among the trainees. The schools which worked with a number of providers mentioned problems of trying to timetable trainees appropriately, especially those who attended the schools for part of the week, and those with longer practicum periods.

When the schools expressed concerns about the new providers, such as a possible lower calibre of trainees, and poorer standards of training, it was clear that most were not talking about the providers with whom they were closely associated. Their comments were based more on possibilities than personal experience.

## Links with the Literature

Turney's (Cruickshank, 1990) theory of the potential for conflict between providers and practicum schools through poor communication, misunderstandings, and different views on effective teaching practice can be seen to be a possibility for only 2 of the new providers covered in the current study. The relationships between the other 3 and the schools was very close, meeting Renwick and Vize's (1993) requirement that the provider should help the trainee to cope more effectively in the schools. These latter providers can be seen to have bridged the gap between theory and practice described by Battersby and Ramsay (1990), and they met the need for close collaboration required by the Centre for Research on Work, Education and Business (1997).

Dobbins's (1996) 5 components of an effective practicum are met to a lesser extent by most of the schools and providers in the current study than they were by the normal and model schools and the traditional providers (Julian, 1997). Dobbins said that the practicum should focus on the classroom, school, and community; take account of both intended and unintended learning outcomes; provide time for action and reflection; allow for individual needs to be met; and create opportunities for collaborative learning situations. In the current study, the practicums focused on the classroom and school, but there was little emphasis on the wider school community, as shown by the minor importance accorded by most schools and providers to communication with parents as a goal of the practicum. The associates and other school staff spent a similar amount of out-of-class time to that spent by normal and model school teachers with the trainees, thereby allowing opportunities for the trainees to "take account of both intended and unintended learning outcomes", and for collaborative learning to take place. Time is allowed for "action and reflection" through the timetabling of the trainees so that they observe, discuss, teach, and receive feedback. It is questionable whether the individual needs of the trainees are met by all of the schools, especially those with a large number of trainees from a variety of different providers, but most schools said that they tried to meet the requirements of the trainees. The perspectives of the trainees on all of these points would provide valuable research data.

The NZEI Te Riu Roa (1997) concerns appear to be realised to some extent. Many of the schools in the sample were having to cope with a number of different philosophies of teacher education. Some associate teachers have trainees from different providers together in their

classrooms, which must call for a great deal of flexibility. Some of the larger schools have managed to allocate staffing time to liaison teachers or co-ordinators, and some providers pay for such release time. Some schools have dealt with the competition for associates by restricting the number of providers with whom they work. Others have designated almost all of their registered teachers as associates, which could mean that the trainees are exposed to a range of role models, some of a lesser standard than others.

It is beyond the scope of this study to answer Gibbs's (1997) question about the ability of the teacher educators and mentors to encourage reflective practices. One new provider appears to have developed a model of reflection, where the trainees are required to consider and comment on a detailed account of proceedings in the classroom for every lesson they teach. A follow-up study of these trainees 2 years after graduation would be an interesting check on their reflective skills.

## Conclusions

Kathryn Wallace, Director of the Division of Minority Education of the Kentucky education authority (1997) points out that:

> In Kentucky, districts participating in a collaborative effort with a college of education to sponsor an alternative certification program must guarantee graduates a teaching position upon successful completion of requirements. Many principals and experienced faculty members have informed us that teachers trained through the alternative certification program are superior to traditionally trained teachers entering the classroom straight from college. Principals have also said that they would hire as many alternatively trained teachers as they can get. (p. 58)

A number of the school respondents participating in the current study expressed similar views to those of Kathryn Wallace about some of the new providers. Other school respondents were more cautious in their response to the changes in pre-service teacher education. It appears, however, that many of the fears expressed by educators when the new providers were established cannot be substantiated. Most of the new providers in the current study have developed close relationships with schools, and provide a challenge to the traditional providers to emulate some of their practices with regard to practicums in order to avoid criticism from the schools which work with both old and new.

Some concerns expressed by educationists, such as the pressure on schools to provide practicums for a number of providers, reported in the study of normal and model schools (Julian, 1997) as well as in the current study, are particularly valid in locations where there is a large number of providers. The current research indicates the need for a collaborative effort among schools and providers in these areas in order to co-ordinate their practicum requirements, and ease the pressure on schools. Whether this could happen in an age of competition and contestability is open to question. Concerns about standards were also raised by a number of schools. It was suggested that some new providers were lured into teacher education by the possibility of gaining EFTS funding more easily for places for teacher trainees than they would for students in other fields. If that is the case, then anybody responsible for approving teacher education courses, and registering graduates from such courses, will need to maintain systems which involve constant vigilance.

When the current study is compared with that of the normal and model schools (Julian, 1997), it is clear that the advantages to providers of schools such as the normal schools outweighed any disadvantages to those providers. The normal schools are specifically designated to provide practicums, with funding, buildings, and additional staffing allocations. The trainees are part of their usual daily experience. Many of the schools in the current study were used by the new providers in similar ways to the normal schools, but they lacked the advantages of designation and funding, which helped the normal schools to attract high-calibre teachers with a specific role of teacher education. The Ministry of Education's (1997) Green Paper on Teacher Education recommends the abolition of normal and model schools, and the provision of funding to the providers of teacher education so that they can choose their own practicum schools. It seemed likely from the research involving the traditional providers that they would choose the former normal and model schools for their practicums (Julian, 1997). It would seem equally likely that the relationships developed between the new providers in this sample and their practicum schools in their early years of operation will persist. Some issues have been identified arising from the proliferation of training providers—they will need to be resolved if the end result is to be a better education system for the school children of New Zealand.

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# APPENDIX 1

## *SCHOOL QUESTIONNAIRE*

1. Please tell me about your school

*Number*

(a) Students _____

(b) Staffing entitlement _____

(c) Qualifications of teachers:

Dip Teaching/TT Cert _____

Undergrad diploma, part-degree, Higher Dip Tchg _____

Degree, Adv Dip Tchg _____

Other (*describe*) _____

(d) MOE (socio-economic) decile _____

(e) Ethnicity of students:

European/Pakeha _____

Maori _____

Pacific Island _____

Asian _____

Other _____

(f) Special funding granted to the school to recompense the costs of providing teacher education—*give details and specify source*:

(g) Any other compensation/incentive to school or associate teachers?

_____

_____

_____

2.(a) Are there any special criteria to do with teacher education which you apply when selecting staff?

Yes ❑ No ❑

*If yes*, what are they?

_____

_____

_____

(b) Are there any selection criteria for associate/mentor teachers? *Yes/ No*

*If yes,* give details, including who does the selection.

_____

_____

3. (i) Is there a school professional development plan?

Yes ❑ No ❑

*If yes,* what is its focus this year?

_____

_____

_____

(ii) Are trainee teachers included within the plan?

Yes ❑ No ❑

*If yes,* in what way?

_____

_____

_____

4. I understand that you have had some trainee teachers from _____ *(Provider A)* this year. Did you have any from any other provider? *Yes/No*

*If yes,* who was it?

5. (i) How well do you feel that trainee teachers are prepared for their practicums by _____ *(Provider A)?*

Very well ❑ Adequately ❑ Poorly ❑ Variably ❑

Why do you think that?

_____

_____

_____

(ii) *(If necessary)* And what about the other providers?

Very well ❑ Adequately ❑ Poorly ❑ Variably ❑

Why do you think that?

_____

_____

_____

6. Please comment on each of the following, in relation to your school:

(a) Role in pre-service teacher education

(i) For the first 2 terms of 1997, please specify number of:

| | *Number* *A* | *B* |
|---|---|---|
| trainee teachers undergoing teaching practice | ____ | ____ |
| trainee teachers undergoing micro-teaching | ____ | ____ |
| trainee teachers undergoing demonstration teaching | ____ | ____ |
| trainee teachers undergoing other practical experience *(specify)* | ____ | ____ |

_____

_____

_____

(ii) Are there any special roles of the teachers associated with the practicums:

Describe: _____

_____

_____

(b) Approximately how much time per week would they spend on practicum-related things? *Associates:* _____

*Others (specify):* _____

_____

_____

(c) Do you get any special training/professional development assistance from the training provider/s? *(Probe for details)*

*A.* _____

_____

_____

*B.* _____

_____

_____

(d) What is your relationship with the training provider/s?

(i) Are you consulted about the trainees' curricula or programmes?

A.Yes ❑ No ❑ B.Yes ❑ No ❑

(ii) Do you get feedback from the practicums?

A. Yes ❑ No ❑ B. Yes ❑ No ❑

*If yes,* how do you use the information?

_____

_____

_____

(iii) Do you or your staff give lectures at the _____/s ?

Yes ❑ No ❑

7. (i) What do you see as the most important goals of the teaching practicum? Please rate the following in order of importance 1–7 and add comments if necessary:

- ❑ pedagogy
- ❑ classroom management
- ❑ curriculum coverage
- ❑ communication with parents
- ❑ school governance
- ❑ assessment of school students
- ❑ teaching specific groups of students (Maori/other ethnic/special needs/gifted)

*Comments:*

_____

_____

_____

(ii) What specific assistance do you provide for trainee teachers to reach these goals?

pedagogy

_____

_____

_____

classroom management

curriculum coverage

communication with parents

school governance

assessment

teaching specific groups of students

(iii) Are the trainees involved in any extracurricular activities at your school? Please give details.

(iv) What feedback do you give students on their practicum?

oral

written

(v) What sort of assessment criteria do you use?

(vi) Who decides this?

(vii) Who does the assessment?

8. What evidence can you give of positive outcomes from your involvement in trainee teacher education? *Please comment on:*

(a) Trainee teacher satisfaction:

A.

B.

(b) Provider satisfaction:

A.

B.

(c) Any relevant material from your latest ERO report:

(d) Is there any follow-on effect from involvement with the practicums for:

(i) Your school's students

(ii) Your school's teachers:

_____

_____

_____

(iii) The school as a whole:

_____

_____

_____

9. (a) Are there any specific problems for your school arising from the provision of practicums?

Yes ❑ No ❑

(b) *If yes,* give details and describe what measures you have taken to solve the problem(s)

_____

_____

_____

10. Do you have any comments on recent changes to teacher education?

_____

_____

_____

# APPENDIX 2

## QUESTIONNAIRE FOR PRACTICUM CO-ORDINATORS

1. What is your definition of a teaching practicum?

_____

_____

_____

2. I have a list of some of the possible goals of the teaching practicum? Please rate the following in order of importance and add comments if necessary:

pedagogy

_____

_____

_____

classroom management

_____

_____

_____

curriculum coverage

_____

_____

_____

communication with parents

_____

_____

_____

school governance

_____

_____

_____

assessment of school students

_____

_____

_____

teaching specific groups of students (Maori/other ethnic/special needs/gifted)

_____

_____

_____

other—specify

_____

_____

_____

3. Describe the way you design and organise practicums:
   How many organisers?

   Contracts with individual teachers?

   Contract with school?

   What sort of contact with the school (one person?)

4. What specific assistance do you expect schools to provide for trainee teachers to reach the goals above?

   pedagogy

   _____

   _____

   _____

   classroom management

   _____

   _____

   _____

   curriculum coverage

   _____

   _____

   _____

   communication with parents

   _____

   _____

   _____

52

school governance

assessment

teaching specific groups of students (Maori/other ethnic/special needs/gifted)

other—specify

5. (a) How do you choose the schools which you use for practicums—what criteria do you use? (*Probe for decile ratings, ethnicity of students, geographic location)*

(b) Is there any selection procedure for associate teachers? (*Probe who does it and how)*

(c) Is there any training/training guidelines for associate teachers? Describe:

6. Please describe your relationship with these schools. Please comment on:
   (a) Amount of contact *(Probe nature and extent)*
      (i) informal involvement with the practicums (e.g. school visits by lecturers, assessment of trainees' work at the schools):

(ii) formal (e.g. membership of advisory committees, professional development for associates)

(b) Any specific funding that you provide to the schools to assist with practicums *(Probe for details)*

(c) Other

7. (a) How do you assess whether the practicum experience has been successful for trainee teachers for each of the goals mentioned above?
pedagogy

classroom management

curriculum coverage

communication with parents

school governance

assessment of school students

_____

_____

_____

teaching specific groups of students (Maori/other ethnic/special needs/gifted)

_____

_____

_____

other—specify

_____

_____

_____

(b) Who is involved in deciding on the assessment - you or the school?

(c) Who carries out the assessment?

8. And finally, please could you tell me the names of 5 schools which you have used for practicums this year. I would like to talk to them about their role in teacher education.

_____

_____

_____

*That is all of the questions. Thank you for your help.*